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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/964,475	09/28/2001	Takuya Okamoto	ASA-724-02	3236
86636 7590 07/01/2009 BRUNDIDGE & STANGER, P.C. 1700 DIAGONAL ROAD, SUITE 330 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314				
EXAMINER				
COLBERT, ELLA				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3696				
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/964,475

Applicant(s)

OKAMOTO ET AL.

Examiner

Ella Colbert

Art Unit

3696

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 April 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 34-41, 46 and 48 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 34-41, 46 and 48 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/C2)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claim 34-41, 46, and 48 are pending in the communication filed 04/10/09 entered as Amendment and RCE.
2. The claim objections from the prior Office Action in view of Applicants' amendments are hereby withdrawn.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 04/10/09 has been entered.

Claim Objections

Claims 34, 38, and 48 are objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 34 recites "acquiring, by a processor, information on a position ... document for full-text search;". This claim should recite "acquiring, by a processor, information on a position ... document for a full-text search;". Claim 48 has a similar problem. Also, claim 34 recites "generating, by a processor, a text string of the structured document ... added thereto;". This claim limitation would be better recited as "generating, by a processor, a text string of the structured document ... added to the structured document;". Claim 48 has a similar problem. Claim 34 recites "by a processor" in

almost every claim limitation which is not necessary. Claim 38 recites "... wherein the character string meeting the search query is displayed in highlighted text ... plurality of highlight display formats for each query term". This claim limitation would be better recited as "... wherein the character string meeting the search query is displayed in highlighted text ... plurality of highlighted display formats for each query term" in order to be in agreement with the other claims.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 34, 40, and 46 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 34 recites "inputting a search query via an input unit;". It is vague and indefinite whether a person is inputting a search query or the input unit is inputting the search query. Claims 35-41 are also rejected because they depend from a rejected base claim.

Claim 40 recites "... , wherein the display format of highlighted display ... in weighting predetermined for each query term". It is unclear and indefinite as to what Applicants' are trying to say in this claim limitation. It appears that words are omitted because the claim limitation as written does not make sense.

Regarding Claim 46. Claim 46 recites means plus function language. A general purpose computer, as disclosed in the specification, can be programmed to perform very different tasks in very different ways, simply disclosing a computer as the structure designated to perform a particular function does not limit the scope of the claim to the corresponding structure, material acts that perform the function, as required by section 112, paragraph 6. Therefore, the means plus function language of the claim lacks sufficient disclosed structure under 112(6) and therefore is indefinite under 112(2). See 417 F.3d at 1249. Claim 46 should recite as follows: "means for analyzing a structured document and for generating an original analyzed structured document to be searched; ...; means for full-text searching and processing for acquiring information on a position of a character string ...;".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claim 48 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Referring to claim 48. Claim 48 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Unless there are executable instructions by the computer, the claim is considered to be nonstatutory under 35 USC 101.

The claim limitation should be recited as "A computer-readable recording

medium for storing a program with computer executable instructions, for implementing a structured document”.

Claim 48 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Based on Supreme Court precedent a method claim must (1) be tied to another statutory class of invention (such as a particular apparatus) or (2) transform underlying subject matter (such as an article or materials) to a different state or thing (see at least *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. 175, 184 (1981); *Parker v. Flook*, 437 U.S. 584, 588 n.9 (1978); *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 70 (1972); *Cochrane v. Deener*, 94 U.S. 780, 787-88 (1876)). A method claim that fails to meet one of the above requirements is not in compliance with the statutory requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101 for patent eligible subject matter. Here claim 48 fails to meet the above requirements since there is not a sufficient tie to another statutory class.

This claim in order to be statutory needs an apparatus in the body of the claim because the claim is interpreted as containing method steps.

Inquiries

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ella Colbert whose telephone number is 571-272-6741. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, 5:30AM-3:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dixon Thomas can be reached on 571-272-6803. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Ella Colbert/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3696

June 30, 2009